Financial Assistance to Mahila Swastha Sangh

3427. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Mahila Swastha Sangh is working in different states;

(b) if so, the financial assistance given to the MSS worker;

(c) whether Government received any representation from the Mahila Swastha Sangh for utilising their service in the rural areas of the country; and

(d) whether Government utilise the services of MSS for rural health education and other programmas of family welfare and awareness against AIDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Under the Scheme there is no scope for payment to individual MSS members. An amount of Rs. 1530 is given to every MSS for a period of one year after its constitution. In subsequent years Rs. 1200 per annum is provided to each MSS for recurring expenses and conducting their activities.

One representation has been received from an MSS Union and it is not possible to concede the same as the scheme envisages voluntary work by community members for health education and awareness generaton in their immediate neighbourhood.

(d) yes, Sir.

Inclusion of Hepatitis-B Vaccine in the National Immunisation Programme

3428. DR. D. MASTHAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many people/children have died due to Hepatitis-B virus during the last three years in the country;

(b) whether Government will include Hepatitis-B vaccine in the National Immunisation Programme to eradicate this killer virus; and

(c) if answer to part (b) of the question be in the negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) No authentic data is available of the number of the deaths caused by Hepatitis-B infection alone. However, according to available data, the number of cases of viral Hepatitis (all types) during 1995 to 1997 (provisional) is as follows:-

Year	No. of Persons infected	No. of persons died
1995	98943	943
1996	117954	801
1997	89038	962

(b) and (c) Hepatitis B vaccination has not been included under the National Immunization Programme as the estimated cost will be around Rs. 525 crores per annum and the measure if initiated will have to be continuad indefinitely to cover all children born in the country with 3 doses. Availability of funds to sustain this over such a long period cannot be assured. In order to reduce the risk, however State Governments have been advised to provide vaccination to the concerned hospital workers.